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POLYGAMY
UNSCRIPTURAL;
OR
TWO DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

Philaethes and Monogamus,

IN WHICH

Some of the PRINCIPAL ERRORS

OF

The Rev^d. Mr. M-D-N's
THELYPHTHORA
ARE DETECTED.

By JOHN TOWERS.

Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in Sheep's Clothing.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the AUTHOR, and sold by ALEX. HOGG,
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POLYGRAPHIC
UNIVERSITY
OR
TWO-DIALOGUES

A. M. C. and M. C. C.
S. M. C. and M. C. C.
S. M. C. and M. C. C.

The Rev. Mr. M. C. C.
T. H. C. and M. C. C.
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Printed by J. W. Smith, 10, St. Paul's Churchyard, London.
In the Year 1817.
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Polygamy Unscriptural,
O R
D I A L O G U E S
B E T W E E N
Philaethes and Monogamus,
Two Old Friends, &c.

D I A L O G U E I.

Monogamus. **W**HAT, my friend, Philaethes,
Is it you I have been following,
at a distance, so long?

Philaethes. Yes, Monogamus, and had I known
you were behind, I should have waited for your
coming up.—But pray, Whither are you travelling
this way?

Monog. I am going about three miles farther to
see a piece of ground, which I have lately made a
purchase of, on which I purpose to build some
houses, that I think will produce me greater ad-
vantage, than the common interest of my money.

Phil. Ah! my friend, Monogamus, how anx-
ious you are about the things of this world!

B

Monog.

Monog. What then, Would you have me pay no regard to my temporal concerns ?

Phil. Do not mistake me, I would wish you to attend to every thing that is proper, but I would have you to consider that your increasing your riches, or your possessing or enjoying any of the transitory things of this world, can by no means be so important as your eternal welfare ; I should therefore heartily rejoice to find you seeking *first* the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and making that your principal business ; for as our Lord has said, *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?* And it is very possible, to be thus engaged in seeking after the salvation of our souls, and yet to attend suitably to worldly business, at the same time.

Monog. Your present discourse reminds me of a sermon I once heard from one of your *Gospel-preachers* (as you call them) who, I remember, preached in much the same strain as you have just been speaking ; I mean Mr. M-d-n, who has lately appeared in a very singular character, as an author. Pray, what think you of his late publication in favour of Polygamy, &c. I thought Polygamy was no part of Christ's Gospel ; but what say you on that head ? Can you defend your favourite preacher's work ?

Phil. In respect to that work, I must say, that, excepting those parts, which point out the want of
 severer

severer laws in this country, against adultery, and against those who seduce single women (these, and some few judicious observations on other matters excepted) and then I must avow that it is an irrational, an antisciptural, and a very pernicious book; and that, however the author may have discovered great learning, and fine abilities, in this work, yet, I believe his *Thelyphthora* will be found at last among the wood, hay and stubble, which shall be burned in the Great Day; and I consider this as a sad proof of that gentleman's awful declension from true religion. But as I am confident that you are wiser than to approve the sentiments which he has lately published to the world, so I hope you will not think the worse, on that account, of the doctrines which he once preached: Because, as the doctrines Peter preached were not made bad by his inexcusable fall, though, thereby the name of Christ was dishonoured; so, my dear friend, the truths once delivered, either at St. Swithin's, London-stone, or at other places, by the author of *Thelyphthora*, are no less excellent, notwithstanding his fall. Let, therefore, the shame of this publication fall upon himself, but let God's truths still be honoured.

Monog: I confess, that I am glad to find that you are no friend to this divine's scheme, as I am disposed to dislike it, not merely from principles of religion, which you know are what I do not pretend to regard much, but because it is in my view irrational.

irrational. However, it appears to me, that as our reverend author has declared, in his advertisement to his reader, that his treatise is one of the most important and interesting publications that have appeared since the Reformation : As this is his opinion of his *own performance*, he certainly will despise all the censures of his common readers; I shall, however, indulge my own thoughts on the subject, and acknowledge to my friend, that I was not a little struck with observing the same venerable clergyman, who left the *Law* for the *Gospel*, and once pleaded so powerfully the cause of true religion ; it astonished me, to find him labouring so hard to prove the honesty, the propriety, and religion, of having more wives than one at the same time ; and it will, undoubtedly, be very pleasing to a man of a lascivious turn, to have it proved to him, that it is quite consistent with the Bible, to adopt the maxims of the East, and of the Koran, and for every man to have a little seraglio of his own ; and this will be found not a little convenient, when any of his wives are indisposed. It may serve also (as Mr. M. most wisely supposes) to keep his wives humble, and to make them suitably obedient. But I think the reverend reformer of 1780 has omitted one thing, which might be of admirable use, and will perhaps be found essentially necessary to his scheme ; and that is a suitable plan for providing a sufficient number of eunuchs, for taking care of the wives, which a man may

be

be disposed to take; for if those wives should happen to be inclined to *variety* themselves, a keeper may perhaps be necessary for them; and really, I think, it is hardly fair in our ingenious author, to tell the ladies plainly, that he does not mean to allow *them* the same liberty as their husbands. I verily believe, that all his pretensions to benefit the female part of the world, will never obtain of them a pardon for this *mortal* sin.

Phil. Be serious, Monogamus, I beseech you; these things are really too momentous to be laughed at especially as I am persuaded that your own good sense must convince you, that if the plan which this fallen professor recommends, were to be generally adopted, it would produce the most wretched confusion in every part of conjugal life; and this indeed Mr. M. tacitly acknowledges in his second volume, where he intimates, that somewhat of this nature is to be expected from the having more wives than one.

Monog. I should indeed have expected better counsel, than this book affords, from one who professes an esteem for the Gospel: But, I am told, notwithstanding the apparent impropriety of Mr. M.'s system, yet, that there are many judicious men, and some students in a certain seminary of learning, who are candidates for the ministry, and notwithstanding, are so far corrupted by this book, as to embrace the sentiments and scheme of this friend to Polygamy.

Phil.

Phil. It is indeed to be lamented, that there are so many who call Christ Lord, Lord, and yet are hypocrites in Zion; and it is yet more lamentable that good men should so often err; and for a time favour the most erroneous sentiments, when presented to them in the dress of truth; but as for those students, who can delight in so diabolical a scheme, I would advise them (if they would be consistent) to decline all thoughts of preaching the Gospel, and at once to renounce the Bible, exchange it for the Koran, and to become avowedly the disciples of Mahomet.

Monog. Whether your advice be good or not, I shall not pretend to determine; but there was nothing in this admirable book that struck me more than the author's laborious attempt to prove in his note, vol. I. page 124, on those words of our Lord, in his Sermon on the Mount, *Whoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*: That our Lord means, by a woman there, a married or betrothed woman; consequently, if I were a young man, and disposed to incontinence, I should have nothing to do, but to find out those young women, who are neither married nor betrothed; and I should then have no occasion to be righteous over-much, like Job, or to make a covenant with my eyes, that I should not look upon a maid; but according to this gentleman's ideas, I might employ my eyes to some purpose; though I rather think my conscience would

would be apt to tell me, that this was pleading for vice, in rather too plain terms, and in a manner barefaced enough to make even a *Counsellor* blush.

Phil. I perceive, from the general scope of your just, though satyrical observations, how evil the natural tendency of this work is; the reverend author of which determines to have nothing to do with translations. This resolution should have made him very impartial as to the Original Scriptures; but it is impossible to read his two volumes without seeing that the meaning of words is often perverted to serve a cause; this is strikingly the case in his note on Job xxxi. 1. there Job says, *I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?* The word here used for maid is [בתולה] the common Hebrew word for virgin or maid in general, without respecting betrothment, or any thing of the kind; and is the very word which we have in Deut. xxii. 28. for a virgin, who is not betrothed, where it is said, *If a man find a damsel that is [בתולה] a virgin, which is not betrothed, &c.* It is therefore most shamefully intruding *his own* improper interpretation of Scripture on the Christian world, for Mr. M. to tell us that Job meant a *betrothed maid* in this place, and it is an interpretation only worthy those who have eyes full of *fornication*, if not of *adultery*: But the plain meaning of Job was, that as he was convinced of the evil of lusting after women in general, so he was particularly sensible, what a powerful temptation a beautiful

beautiful maid was, to the lusts of the flesh ; and therefore he wished, in a particular manner, to avoid that snare : But we may see, by Mr. M. that when once we become champions for error, we are apt, like Adam, to take refuge among the trees of the garden, and to expose our own folly and apostacy.

Monog. I doubt not but the observation you have now made, concerning the word used by Job, is just, and that it contains in itself no such meaning as Mr. M. would force upon it ; but it has been thought by some, that however other parts of this gentleman's book might, with propriety, be opposed, yet, that where he contends that either Polygamy is lawful, or Jesus Christ himself is a bastard, that there he is unanswerable.

Phil. Whatever others may think, I am clearly of opinion, that this part of his building is built upon the sand, as well as every other part thereof, but I am grieved to think how much he strengthens the hands of the Deist, by this impious (as I will call it) method of argument. It is possible that a sensible Deist may read Thelyphthora, and perhaps its arguments may not appear so cogent to him, as they do to the learned author ; and probably the Deist may not thereby be convinced, that Polygamy is lawful ; but yet he may say, Mr. M. is professedly a friend to what is called Divine Revelation, and yet he is so desirous of proving that Polygamy is lawful, that he tells us

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the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth must be given up, if polygamous marriages were not legal in the sight of God: And if Mr. M. goes so far on a principle, which Christians in general deny, surely I am justifiable in rejecting the whole Scripture." But before Mr. M. had helped the Deists by this horrid thought, and suggested so blasphemous an idea, he should have remembered, that it is as necessary that Jesus Christ should be proved to be the legitimate son of Abraham, as that he should be proved to be the son of David in a *legal* sense; for he is emphatically promised in Genesis, chap. xxii. as the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations were to be blessed. But, if (as this gentleman says) illicit commerce, practised by any of the ancestors of Christ, proves him illegitimate, then Christ cannot be the legitimate son of the Patriarch Abraham, because Judah, one of our Lord's ancestors, had illicit commerce with his daughter in law, Tamar, as mentioned in Genesis, chap. xxxviii. and Pharez, who was our Lord's ancestor, as appears from Matt. i. 3. was born of that illicit commerce. But as Christ's coming from him could not prove that he was not the legitimate son of Abraham, nor the propriety of being joined to an harlot, much less the using a *daughter in law* as an harlot; neither does our Lord's being descended from those who practised Polygamy, prove the propriety of such marriages, nor make his legitimacy doubtful. This is an argument Mr. M. cannot well get over, un-

less he will be consistent with himself, and say, that whoredom is lawful, because some of Christ's ancestors practised it : And it is a novel doctrine to suppose, that because the ancestors of any person were guilty of illicit commerce, that therefore their posterity, born a thousand years afterwards, were illegitimate, or bastards ; according to this method of determining things, every person is in danger of being proved illegitimate.

Monog. I really think, Philalethes, that your last observation is very right ; and upon that principle, we might even venture to question whether Mr. M. himself be legitimate, without the least reflection upon his immediate parents. No doubt but he was born in lawful wedlock ; but perhaps in the course of time, between the first and the last century, some of Mr. M.'s ancestors might have indulged illicit commerce, and then, *ipso facto*, he is illegitimate ; he has no right to inherit his father's estate, as he himself has pronounced sentence.

Pbil. Your droll retort upon our celebrated author, reminds me of another of his criticisms on the Hebrew text of the Old Testament : He tells us, in one place, that the word [בן] *Ben* strictly speaking, signifies a legitimate son, in distinction from a bastard ; yet, in a note on the same chapter he is forced to own, that it is the common name for a male child ; and after this he has the effrontery to tell you, that he thinks Nathan used the word [בן] *Ben* improperly, as tho' Nathan did not understand

understand Hebrew as well as Mr. M. or; as if the Holy Ghost, who inspired the Scriptures, did not know, as well as himself, what words were proper to be used. And, according to this gentleman's scheme, every man who meets with a word in the Scripture, that opposes his beloved lusts or errors, may say with this author, that some word they dislike is used *improperly*, and therefore reject the most important truths of the Gospel. But to prove that [בן] *Ben* is sometimes used for natural children, we need only refer to Hosea i. 3. where it is used for a son of whoredoms: This indeed Mr. M. acknowledges to be the case, in Judges xi. 1. and 1 Kings iii. 20. And as to his observation concerning the use of the English word *Son*; that it is peculiarly applied to *Sons* in a legal sense, it has very little weight in it; for when we make use of the word *Son*, unless we prefix some such words as natural or illegitimate, we naturally conclude that by the term *Son*, is meant a person who is so in a legal sense; and Mr. M.'s remark respecting David's child by adultery, being mentioned twelve times in eight verses, 2 Sam. xii. 15. as [הילד] a man child, and not by the word [בן] *Ben* will prove nothing as to the absolute legitimate signification of that word, when we consider that in the 2d Kings, iv. 29. and six following verses, the son of the Shunamite is mentioned nine times, and yet the word [בן] *Ben* is not used in either of these verses in the original; but [הילד] a manchild, or [נער] a lad; and

and as this could by no means prove the illegitimacy of the Shunamite's son; neither could its not being used in the place Mr. M. refers to, prove that the word ought to be considered as only applicable to legitimate children, or *décisive* for his purpose at all. But what was it Monogamus which made you smile just now?

Monog. It was not, I assure you, that I was insensible of the weight of your arguments; but a laughable idea possessed me that moment, which disordered the muscles of my face: I could not help thinking, what curious female wars would follow, if the practice of taking a plurality of wives should take place: And as I have seen some ladies, in a very striking manner, imitate the appearance of warriors, I think there might be some danger of their learning the use of arms, and wounding their delicate frames in some dangerous manner: I should however tremble for their head-dresses, and other appurtenances of modern decoration. And to be serious on the matter, if once it were to be a prevailing opinion, that a *mere carnal union* was matrimony, or marriage, according to the ordinance of God; it would then be natural to think, that all which is worthy the name of marriage would bid farewell to the Christian world. If we consider men and women as rational creatures, it surely becomes them to obtain some knowledge of each other in a mental way, before they unite together carnally; but if men and women, at first sight, marry, in Mr. M.'s

sense

sense of marriage, it is most likely, that as they marry like beasts, they will be apt to divorce one another as beasts likewise.

Phil. I perceive, my friend, that though you must indulge your merry vein, yet you can upon occasion be serious; and then I doubt not but you will think with me, that Polygamy is not only calculated to promote female jealousies and contentions, but also, the most cruel differences between husbands and their wives: for it is impossible to suppose that a woman of sensibility, who really loves her husband, could contentedly divide his heart with a rival. And where there is no grace, and violent passions, there will frequently be great danger of murder; and as iniquity, like the daughters of the horse-leach, is continually crying, "give, give," it is therefore natural to conceive, that when once the having a plurality of wives can be supposed lawful, men, of the principles of our author, will never be satisfied; and at any time, when they have *two* wives, they have nothing to do but to find out some unbetrothed damsel, and *bumble* her, and then, according to this licentious system, God himself requires them to add her to the number of their wives.

Monog. I hope this gentleman, like a polygamist of more ancient date, has some beloved wife, *Ayesha*, whom he is determined to cleave to, or else she is not likely to enjoy much happiness. And I suppose that if any wise man should be so deceived

as to think, that the laws of God authorize him to have more wives than one, that he will naturally conclude, that, for the sake of peace, he must keep but one of his wives at home, and the other, or the rest abroad, in the capacity of humble left-handed wives, as Mr. M. speaks, or as we say now of a mistress or mistresses; and really I think that the noble lord S——h, who is so famous for his attachment to women, and who has attended to the ordinance of marriage, in *Mr. M.'s way*, in a variety of instances, should certainly allow this extraordinary writer a pension, for defending the memory of Miss R. and asserting, as he does in a note, vol. II. p. 224, that she was the wife of the noble lord S——, as he had cohabited with her for many years, and had many children by her, and therefore says Mr. M. she was the wife of the noble lord. This may serve as a good hint to other ladies, who may be in this sense married to that noble lord, or any other great man; and it will certainly tend, if this divine is not mistaken, to promote the cause of virtue,

Phil. I consider it as opening the flood-gates of vice and immorality, in a very awful manner, for one who calls himself a minister of Christ to throw out such hints, concerning (what I shall call kept mistresses) and how injurious to those noble ladies, who are really and rationally married to different noblemen, to recommend such a doctrine. And however this gentleman evidently wishes, in p. 9,

of

of his Dedication, that the legislative powers may establish laws in favour of Polygamy; yet I cannot but conclude, that they are wiser than even to propose such a scheme in Parliament.

Monog. There is one observation which this worthy teacher has made use of, to promote his beloved idea, which if I could view in the same light in which he introduces it, would give me a very ill opinion of the primitive Christians. He says, vol. I. p. 192, that Polygamy was probably very frequent amongst the first Christians; because, says our accurate logician, Paul directs Timothy to chuse those for bishops and deacons, who were the husbands of one wife. If I could think this a fair conclusion, I should consequently infer, that the first Christians probably were much given to carelessness, intemperance, bad behaviour, inhospitality, impatience, brawling, and covetousness; nay, that they were even given to drunkenness; because the Apostle says, that bishops and deacons should not only be the husbands of one wife, but that they must be vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, not given to wine, no strikers, &c.

Phil. It must be evident to the impartial reader, that the Apostle has no such meaning; and it is a cruel wresting of his words thus to interpret them: He undoubtedly meant to intimate, that the *Heathens*, amongst whom the first Christians sojourned, were given to *those* evils; and especially, that they

very

very frequently cohabited with women, without any other ceremony than what Mr. M. calls the ordinance of God; and this they did without having the happiness of an acquaintance with the admirable author of Thelyphthora; and therefore the Apostle would have all Christians avoid those vile practices, but especially bishops and deacons should be particularly circumspect, not only as Christians, but as being in a public capacity, and examples to others,

Monog. I have always considered this as the meaning of the Apostle; and in my view of things, such an exhortation was perfectly suitable; for if we see a private Christian intemperate or intoxicated, or given up to any vice, we justly condemn his practice; but if we see a minister guilty of the same evil, though only in the same degree, we think his guilt far greater than if he were only a private Christian, on account of his character. This I should suppose was intended by what Paul says to his son Timothy, in the third chapter of his first Epistle. But when I observe, that because the term wife is sometimes used in a distributive sense, when put in the singular number, that therefore Mr. M. wishes to prove, that when it is evidently intended to express but one wife, it does not there mean that a man should have but one wife; but that it must *generally* be understood in a distributive sense; and while I remark that he would wish us to think, when other Scriptures seem to intimate, that it is proper to have but one wife at a time, or that

a man

a man should cleave to his wife; that this respects every one of those wives which a man may chuse to take, and does not imply any impropriety in having more than one; and if I add to all this, this supposition, that our Lord, when he says, the man and his wife are one flesh, means nothing more than that the man and every one of his wives are one flesh, be they ever so many. All these things considered, I really wonder, that, by the help of sophistry, this gentleman had not proceeded a little farther, and respecting Paul's using the word *wife* in the singular number, to shew the impropriety of bishops and deacons having more than one wife, that Mr. M. had not suggested some idea to evade the force of that exhortation, and take off the prohibition from ecclesiastics. By this means, Mr. M. might have benefited the sacred bench, and the clergy at large, if any of them were disposed to Polygamy: and the only way in which I can account for this omission, is, that Mr. M. is not perhaps either a bishop or a deacon, in the primitive sense of that term: Otherwise I am disposed to believe he would have made such an attempt, as I cannot think that he has any great aversion to the practical part of his favourite system, because he seems to feel the subject on which he writes, in every progressive step of his work.

Phil. It is, I imagine, too evident, that Mr. M. is so much attached to his polygamous notions, that he will sacrifice almost every thing thereto; if this

had not been the case, I think he would never have intimated, that we should have reason to doubt of Christ's legitimacy, if Polygamy could be proved sinful; nor would he have understood those plain Scriptures, which you have now referred to, as speaking a language which the Holy Ghost never intended: and according to his method of interpreting Scripture, the Bible would be of very little use to any but those who understand Hebrew and Greek, unless they will depend on Mr. M.'s translation. But it is easy to observe, that the translators of the Bible were much more honest and impartial than this author, and therefore they did not so render any passage as to favour Polygamy, or any other vice.

Monog. I am quite of your opinion, Philaethes. —But, see, this is the piece of ground which I mentioned to you; if you please we will walk in and look at it, and then resume our discourse concerning this singular work.

Phil. I have not the least objection to either of these proposals, and therefore, if you will lead the way, I will follow you.

End of the First Dialogue.

DIALOGUE II.

Monog. **N**OW, Philaethes, you have seen the whole, and on this spot, which you will observe is remarkably pleasant, I mean to build an house for myself, and wish to know what you think of the situation?

Phil. I like it much, and it is in so many respects like an earthly paradise, that if you should be persuaded to live here, your situation would remind me of a very judicious observation, which was once made by a pious gentleman to a nobleman.

Monog. What was the observation?

Phil. After the nobleman had shewn him every part of a very elegant seat in his possession, the gentleman said, "My Lord, Your house and gardens are so grand, and so pleasantly situated, that I hope your lordship will endeavour to secure heaven, or else you will be a great loser when you die;" and I hope, my dear friend, Monogamus, you will take the same hint.

Monog. I could wish that you would not so frequently force religion into our conversation; for
though

though I pretend not to so much piety as yourself, yet I have almost the vanity to think myself as good as Mr. M : if it be his religion to write such books as his two volumes of Thelyphthora.

Phil. It is not, my dear friend, from any intention to affront you, that I sometimes speak of religion; nor is it to insinuate any thing of my own goodness,—far from it; but it is from a sense of the importance of religion, and because the great regard I have for you makes me desire that you may be acquainted with its excellency, and taste the sweetness of true godliness; but I am sorry to hear you intimate, that you are inclined to suppose Mr. M.'s religion induced him thus to write: And I have ever thought it ungenerous in persons who do not fear God themselves, that when they see professors act unsuitably, they are so ready to say, "This is your religion," when in reality, so far as professors of godliness act unworthy of their profession, it is their *want of religion*; for Christianity teaches every thing that is lovely and of good report. But as you desire it, we will return to our former topic, and take a farther view of this famous Treatise of Female Ruin.

Monog. I could wish so to do; and as a remarkable note in his first volume just now comes into my memory, I will ask your opinion of it: The note I refer to is on page 182, which, if you will bear with me, I will repeat, and beg your remarks on it.

Phil.

Phil. I shall be obliged to you to repeat it.

Monog. His words are as follow : “ It is to be
 “ feared, that there are not a few females, who
 “ (like other monopolists) take the advantage of
 “ the poor husband’s situation, to use him as they
 “ please; and this for pretty much the same rea-
 “ son, why the *Ass* in the Fable insulted and kick-
 “ ed the poor *Old Lion*,—because it is not in their
 “ power to *resent* it as they *ought*. The advice
 “ which King Ahasuerus received from his wife
 “ men, the seven princes of Media and Persia,
 “ upon Queen Vashti’s disobedience, would have
 “ an excellent effect could it be followed : many an
 “ high spirited *female* would have too cogent a
 “ reason against the indulgence of a refractory
 “ disposition not to suppress it. Her pride, which
 “ is now the husband’s torment, would then be-
 “ come his security, at least in a great measure ;
 “ for pride is a vice, which, as it tends to self-ex-
 “ altation, maintains uniformly its own principle,
 “ —not to bear the thoughts of a *rival*. See
 “ Esther i. 10, &c. As things are with us, the
 “ poor man must grind in *mola asinaria* during life.

“ It is certain, that nothing can be a release
 “ from the bond of marriage itself but death, or an
 “ act of adultery in the wife ; but that a man is
 “ at all events bound to maintain the external
 “ bonds, by cohabiting with a woman, who instead
 “ of being an *help-meet for him* (as we say) becomes,
 “ by the violence and perverseness of her temper
 “ and

“ and disposition, a constant and increasing torment,
 “ and this after the most friendly, tender and kind
 “ admonitions, is not consonant either to Scripture
 “ or reason. Some will tell us, that such a thing
 “ must be looked upon as happening by the will of
 “ Providence, as a chastisement or visitation from
 “ Heaven, and therefore must be submitted to
 “ and endured : So is sickness from the hand of
 “ God : So are afflictions of all kinds, and cer-
 “ tainly to be submitted to with patience and re-
 “ signation ; yet, to use means of recovery from
 “ sickness, and of deliverance from trouble and
 “ affliction are apparent duties, and why not in the
 “ other case ?

I have now given you Mr. M.'s Note just
 as he words it, and I doubt not but you will
 think it remarkably curious ; especially as the
 purport of it is to teach us, that if a man has
 an overbearing wife, who thinks her husband a
 fool, and that she has abilities which qualify her
 to govern him, that in such a case the poor man
 grinds in *mola asinaria* (*i. e.*) in plain English, like a
 horse in a mill, or if you will, like an ass in
 a mill ; and if a man is married to a woman
 of a violent temper, or to a woman given to
 levity, as it is his duty to take physick when
 he is sick, so in this case it is his duty to tell
 his wife, that unless she will behave better, he
 must marry another wife ; and if this *war-*
ning will not improve her behaviour, it is then

his duty to proceed farther, and actually marry another wife, or in other words, form a *personal union* with some other woman, and then the business is done: this indeed is an admirable method to cure the maladies of disobedient wives, and to make them as humble as their husbands can wish them to be, and a salutary scheme in favour of both parties. This abundantly proves, that Mr. M. is desirous of saving the female part of the world from the bad consequences of disobedience to their husbands, as well as from the sad effects of prostitution.

Phil. I remember the note you refer to, and though I am no friend to a woman's governing her husband, yet I was much hurt with the sentiments it contains, and could not help abominating the hints it conveys; but I was yet more disgusted with what he says before that note, where treating of husbands, he speaks thus:

"Many things may happen which may be very
 "reasonable, and indeed unavoidable causes of
 "separation from their wives; as for instance, incurable disease of mind or body, unconquerable violence of temper, perpetual refractoriness of disposition, levity of behaviour, which though not amounting to such proof as to be the ground of *legal* divorce, yet such as may destroy the whole comfort of a man's life. By these and many other means, an husband may be reduced to the situation of

"an

" an unmarried man, harassed by the same de-
 " fires, subject to the same temptations, yet his
 " condition is ten-fold worse; the one may
 " marry, the other cannot; so he must remain
 " hopeless and helpless, or plunge into vice
 " and misery, because he is debarred the re-
 " medy which *God hath provided*, stripped of
 " that undoubted privilege with which God and
 " nature have invested him, by the lies and
 " forgeries of fathers and councils." Here you
 have his *vile system in its own colours*, and the
miseries of Monogamy are strongly painted.

Monog. I think there is something like merit
 in Mr. M.'s performance, I mean his speaking
such opinions so plainly, for he really declares
 his sentiments without reserve. If no other bad
 consequences were like to follow, I confess, I
 should not be very willing to hazard the dis-
 pleasure of the ladies, as he has done; but this
 zealous man is so desirous of promoting the
 public good, that he proceeds without fear,
 knowing how excellent his cause is.

Phil. It is really awful to observe in how
 many instances this gentlemen perverts the Scrip-
 ture: in vol. I. page 385, he tells us, that the
 meaning of our Lord, in Matt. xix. 9, where
 it is said, *Whosoever shall put away his wife, ex-*
cept it be for fornication, and shall marry another,
committeth adultery, is not of such a nature as
 to prove, that all who put away their wives for

any other cause than fornication, and marry other women, commit adultery. This has generally been understood to be Christ's meaning in that passage; but says Mr. M. by *another* here, we must understand *another man's wife*, and then our Lord's words must be read thus, *Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication and marry another (man's wife) committeth adultery*: but there is not the least reason to think, that the text had any such thing in view; and it is no better than mere quibbling in this learned man, when to justify this interpretation he informs us, that we must understand a Greek word [*γυναικα*] as following the word [*αλλην*] another, had he stopped here, he might have been borne with; but to bring this Scripture to his ideas, he directs us to interpret the word [*αλλην*] another; in the sense of [*αλλοτριαν*] a different word, and then we shall understand the text, not as our Lord meant, but as Mr. M. would like it to be understood: and why all this adding to, and altering the Word of God, but because his cause is such, that it cannot be supported from the Word of Truth, as the Holy Ghost has handed it down to us; and because if this text be understood in its natural meaning, it will prove, that if a man puts away his wife, on any account, except adultery, and marries another, even though the second woman be not *another man's wife*, yet, because his first wife be living, and there was no

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just

just cause to put her away, he therefore, in marrying another, commits adultery: but as this doctrine militates against Mr. M.'s system, he endeavours to prove, that the text contains no such meaning; he has, indeed, to justify his remarks on the words, cited the 29th v. of the x. chap. of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where the Apostle is speaking of another man's conscience, and the Greek word [ἀλλή] is so translated; but that place is not pertinent to the case in hand, that rendering is evidently necessary in the text Mr. M. refers to in Corinth. but in Matth. it is not, for the words bear another more obvious meaning; as it is very possible to marry another wife, without marrying *another's* wife, but another conscience must be *another's* conscience, and therefore Paul's words are justly translated *another man's conscience*, but as to our Lord's words in Matthew the case is totally different.

Monog. It appears, that Mr. M. in this criticism has used a little *boly guile* and a little *Gospel deceit*; this he has done also in what he has said respecting Hannah and Peninnah, the two wives of Elkanah: he wishes to prove that Peninnah was the first taken wife, and that Elkanah married Hannah after Peninnah, though he acknowledges, that it is the general opinion of commentators, that Hannah was married to her husband before Peninnah: but this reverend Polygamist determines to differ from such comments, and concludes, that Hannah was the last taken wife, and this he does for the important purpose

of proving that Samuel was born of a polygamous marriage, and that since so great a man of God, as Samuel was, was so born, therefore Polygamy must be lawful; and I conceive, that on the same principle I might say, if I were disposed to the practice of whoredom, Jephthah was a son of whoredoms, and therefore, if God would make use of an harlot, to bring forth such a man as Jephthah, surely he cannot abhor the practice, as is commonly supposed; for though Jephthah was not so great a man as Samuel, yet he was a *great* man, and a judge of Israel.

Phil. You think it wrong in me, my dear friend Monogamus, to introduce religion into our conversation, but you have yourself obliged me to do it now, by your speaking of *holy guile* and *Gospel deceit*. It is too true, that some who *profess* holiness, and a love of the Gospel, do manifest too much deceit and guile; but it is as true, that real holiness of heart, and real love to the Gospel, will induce those who really fear God to scorn and detest every thing of the deceitful kind; but you must still remember, that all who *profess* these things do not really *possess* them: I will not say that Mr. M. is destitute thereof; but I must say, that if his heart be right with God in other things, yet, if we had nothing to judge by but his books in favour of Polygamy, we might judge righteous judgment, and yet judge the worst of him. As to his observations concerning Hannah, I am at a loss for words to express my indignation at them.

Thi;

This gentleman allows Hannah to be spoken of first; and also, that in the original Hebrew, *Peninnah* is called [שנית] the second, as he is forced to allow in a note: Yet, because the word [שנית] sometimes signifies *the other*, it must so signify here, and not the *second*, because, though Mr. M. will not be guided by translations, yet here the English translation seeming to favour his scheme, he chuses to follow it; and as to what he has said concerning Peninnah's being served first in the peace-offerings, there is no proof of that; it is only mentioned, that Elkanah gave her a portion; and in the same verse, that he gave Peninnah's children portions; if therefore that verse will prove Peninnah was served first, it will also prove that her children were served before Hannah: But can any reader, except Mr. M. or some person who is as great a Polygamist as himself, suppose that Elkanah, who loved his wife Hannah so well, would have added to her mortification, by serving the children of her adversary before her? Surely no.

Monog. Mr. M. discovers a most happy talent in getting rid of those Scriptures which make against Polygamy; and however high the fence which the Bible has set, he leaps over it with as much ease as he would leap a hedge in pursuit of a fox: You will bear with this simile, as it is said hunting is Mr. M.'s favourite diversion. But I think one of his most weighty arguments is, that the Patriarchs practised Polygamy, and

and he tells you, that for so doing they had not the least reproof from God, or the most distant hint of his displeasure; on the contrary, the offspring of such wives were blessed in an extraordinary manner.

Phil. It must be acknowledged, that some of the most eminent of the Patriarchs had more wives than one, and that they were not *verbally* reproved or censured for it; and that some of the children of polygamous connections were peculiarly favoured: but if this be considered as a sufficient plea for Polygamy, then it would follow, from the same method of arguing, that as Jacob, the Patriarch, got the Blessing from his father by deceit and fraud, and God never *verbally* reproved him for it, but even crowned his father's blessing with a divine and eternal one; that therefore it is right for men in every age to defraud their brethren, to deceive their parents, and that God himself allows it. This is indeed a wretched subterfuge, which Mr. M. flies to.

Monog. As little as I know of divinity, methinks, if I should go upon such a plan, I could find an excuse for almost every vice.

Phil. You certainly might; but it is not our wisdom to follow the patriarchs in their sinful infirmities, but only to follow them as far as they followed the Lord, and walked with him; and though God did not *verbally* reprove Abraham, or Jacob, or David, for having more wives than one, or Jacob for the deceit and fraud which he practised with his father

ther and brother, yet he reprov'd them all by afflictive providences of different kinds, of which it might be said, as of Abimelech's present, and his speech to Sarah, mentioned in Genesis xx. that *hereby they were all reprov'd*. And Mr. M. must have observed many things in the conduct of the patriarchs, that God certainly abhorred, which, nevertheless, he did not express his displeasure at, *totidem verbis*, in so many words. This must have been the case as to Noah's intoxication, as to the falsehood of Abraham and Isaac, concerning their wives, whom they said were their sisters, and as to the incest of Judah and Lot; and in some such view, we must consider Joseph's swearing by the life of Pharaoh. These and many other similar instances God never reprov'd these saints for, so far as we know, in express terms, and yet there can be no doubt but they were heinous sins in the sight of Jehovah: but if, on account of God's not directly, or verbally reprov'ing these saints, any man should be so weak and wicked as to plead that drunkenness, falsehood, incest, or profane swearing were lawful, and should therefore indulge himself in these vile practices, he would find in the Day of Judgement, that God had taken some effectual methods, *in a way of Providence*, of reprov'ing his saints for their sins; and if himself died in impenitence, he would then find that God had an awful method of reprov'ing such presumptuous sinners in hell. But in a very striking manner were most of the saints who practised

fified polygamy reprov'd, by the many unhappy
 differences which subsisted in their families, in con-
 sequence of their having a plurality of wives; such
 as that between Sarah and Hagar, and Abraham's
 distress about Ishmael, that also between Rachel
 and Leah, and what Jacob must feel in consequence:
 David also was visited of God by the troubles of
 his family, and by his son Absalom going to his
 father's wives; thus was Elkanah reprov'd by the
 contempt which Peninnah cast on his beloved Han-
 nah; and I doubt not but Jacob's dread of his bro-
 ther Esau's killing him was in consequence of his
 remembrance of his treachery to his brother; there-
 by he learned the evil of his former conduct, and
 God's providence corrected him for it. And what
 the Lord says in II. Sam. xii. and 8, concerning his
 giving David, Saul's wives into his bosom, is rather
 a proof of David's insatiability as to women, than
 any proof of God's approbation of polygamy: Mr.
 M. imagines, that this instance respecting David
 must prove the lawfulness of the scheme which he
 is desirous to promote, because God says, that *he*
gave David those wives; but this in reality will
 prove nothing, because in that very book of Sam.
 xii. chap. and 11th verse, the same God declares
 to David, *I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and*
give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy
wives in the sight of the sun; as in this last instance,
 it being said, that God gave David's wives to Ab-
 salom, can never be understood to justify adultery,
 neither

neither can the other instance justify polygamy; if the former proves the lawfulness of having many wives, the other will prove the propriety of an abominable sin. Mr. M. seems in some measure sensible of this, and therefore he tells us, that though the expressions in the two passages are so similar, we must understand one as speaking in favour of his own notion, and yet allows that the other is by no means calculated to excuse adultery, and he has very wisely mentioned the two instances in very different parts of his book. I will not say this is done by design, but I have my suspicions on that head.

Monog. You have refuted Mr. M.'s plea in favour of polygamy, which he has founded upon David's having Saul's wives, in my view, effectually; but although I do not approve of his scheme, I am in doubt whether you can so well get over his observations on Deut. xxi. and 15, respecting a man's having two wives, one beloved and the other hated, and what he says on Deut. xxv. and 5, where the surviving brother is directed to take the deceased brother's wife.

Pbil. In respect to what is said in those Scriptures, it is not possible for Mr. M. to prove from Deut. xxi. and 15, that what Moses there speaks respects a man's having two wives at once; and if it should be concluded, that in the case there spoken of, the two wives were living, *as such*, at the same time, yet this would by no means shew God's approbation of

of Polygamy, if the father and his second wife had sinned, this could be no reason that the first-born child, should on that account suffer; and that Jehovah should direct his servant Moses, to point out certain *regulations* respecting the children of such parents, was no more calculated to shew that God approved of any polygamous acts done before, than Mr. M.'s encouraging the Lock-Hospital, and giving any directions concerning the young women kept there, can indicate his approbation of the vice which brought them into such a situation, as made them wish to enjoy the benefit of that charity. And as to the command of God, which requires the surviving brother to take the wife of his deceased brother, we have no proof that this law extended to men who were *already married*; and it appears from the writings of Josephus, who certainly knew the customs of the Jews better than Mr. M. that when a man was required to marry Ruth, he alleged, by way of excuse, that he had a wife and children, as a reason for not taking his kinsman's wife; and though Mr. M. will not allow that this was the cause of his refusing to marry Ruth, yet a more impartial reader of Josephus, than this discerning gentleman, will certainly conclude that this was the *alleged* reason. And when in Exodus xxi. and 10, God commands that if a man has married his slave, and takes *another* wife, that he shall not withhold the duty of marriage from his *first* wife, the lawfulness of having more wives than one, is no

more proved thereby, than the suitable regulation given in the next chapter respecting those who had goods committed to their trust, which were taken from them, will justify the propriety of acts of theft. If a man thinks, that because he has married his slave, he may cast her off, and marry another, God will thereby teach such a man that his first wife, though originally a slave, was nevertheless his wife in the sight of God, as being betrothed to him, and therefore not to be slighted. And whatever other instances we have of Polygamy in Scripture, as practised by the saints, or of God's giving directions to prevent the evil consequences of that sin, they are certainly only calculated to prove, that God *permitted* Polygamy for wise ends, either for the purpose of increasing those families who professed true religion, that by such a mean the worship of Jehovah might be the more fully and generally established, or for the hardness of the hearts of some, who notwithstanding were real friends to religion; as it is evident that some of the saints who had great grace, yet manifested much corruption. Thus it was with David, in the matter of Bathsheba, and with Jonah, who told God he did well to be angry; which expression was certainly hateful to God, though it was the language of an highly-favoured saint.

Monog. I am glad to hear, Philalethes, that you think, God does not approve of the sins of his people, and if so, I think Mr. M. will meet with some

awful

awful reproof, as his writing this treatise makes it doubtful whether he was not, while penning it, under some such influence as Bernardino Ochino was, who frankly owned, in a note on his dialogue in favour of Polygamy, which was written two hundred years ago, that while he was revising a proof of his publication, a blithesome sort of a lass, who protested she would sooner have a husband and a half, than half a husband, was leaning remarkably hard over his left shoulder, and thought that the story of a cock and a bull, respected the propriety of a cock having many hens, and a bull having many cows.

Phil. Some persons will certainly imagine, that Mr. M. has written under some such influence as that author did, which you refer to; and if men are so irrational as to make beasts their examples, no wonder if such practices are approved, or pleaded for; but men of reason and religion will certainly despise such influences and such arguments; and if God's own people walk in such ways, he will certainly visit them for their sins; because as he is a holy God, he hates all sin wherever he finds it, and even though he may not declare in words, how much he is displeased with them, yet by some sore affliction, he will write over every sin of his people, something like what is said concerning David's adultery, *the thing which David did displeased the Lord*; and if the author of Thelyphthora had possessed a little more of the fear of God, he would rather have wished that his right hand

hand might have forgotten its cunning, than have sent such a diabolical publication into the world.

Monog. It appears to be one part of Mr. M.'s plan, to prove that the man who humbles a virgin ought to marry her, even if he has a wife already; and although the virgin's father should oppose it; and therefore he shews us how the words in Exodus xxii. and 17. should be translated, and how great is the obligation which we are under to him, for thus correcting our English translators?

Phil. The observations of this writer, on the Hebrew word [בְּתוּלָה] in that place, are far from being just: he supposes the man who has enticed a maid that is not betrothed, must marry her, even if her father be against it; but as the text stands *unperverted*, it implies no such thing, either in the original, or in our translation; and therefore Mr. M. will have us render the word [בְּתוּלָה] there used by the English word *though*, and not by *if*, which is evidently the natural meaning of the word in this place: Here he departs from Montanus, whom he so much admires; and indeed it appears to be the determined resolution of this gentleman to depart from truth, from reason, from the Bible, and Christ himself, except he can engage all in the service of Polygamy, or make them speak in favour of a man's marrying all the women whom he chuses to humble, although he should be lawfully married to some woman before.

Monog. It is excessively kind in Mr. M. to engage so sanguinely in the favour of men, who may wish

to marry a second wife, being tired of their first; and if his hints to our Parliament were to be attended to, as he wishes, it would be curious enough to read an act of parliament, in which it should be enacted, that if a married man had *debauched*, or in *M. M.'s delicate idea*, married a virgin, that she was to all intents and purposes, as much his lawful wife, as the woman he had taken for better and for worse before the parson: and it is very possible, that if such a law was made, some polygamists might have more wives in a little time than they could well keep, unless they were very rich, or enough to make them sick of Polygamy, if their estates were large.

Phil. A law to make *single* men marry those young women whom they humble, might in some cases be useful; but it is doubtful whether it would be so in general, as it very frequently happens that the man who persuades a young woman to renounce her virtue, is so vile a character, that she had better bear the shame of her folly, than be tied to him for life; and this was undoubtedly a principal reason why that salutary law was established in Exod. xxii. which is evidently intended to give a parent such power over his daughter, for her benefit, that if a worthless fellow has enticed her, and she by any means should, on cool reflection, be convinced of her folly, and be sensible that she is not likely to be happy with the author of her disgrace, that in such a case the father should have a discretionary power to prevent their living together afterwards. This law

law as it now stands in the Bible appears excellent, but if Mr. M.'s translation of the word [~~DOX~~] be allowed, it loses all its excellency; and it is perhaps a query whether Mr. M. himself, under *some circumstances*, might not think that this rule, without his perversion of a word thereof, was remarkably good; especially if we were to suppose that Mr. M. had two amiable daughters, and that some wretched debauchee should affect the appearance of a worthy man, and in some unguarded hour, persuade one of them to give herself up to him, and he should humble her. Would Mr. M. then rejoice in the idea that God's law obliged the debauchee and his daughter to consider themselves as man and wife? or would it not hurt his feelings as a parent, and make him wish, that though it were impossible to prevent the mischief already done, yet that he had it in his power to prevent a beloved daughter from being chained to a deceitful villain for life?

Monog. In my view of things, this gentleman's system is bad in every respect, and inimical in a particular manner to the clergy in general; for by supposing that no sort of ceremony is necessary to constitute marriage, but that which is common to beasts, as well as rational creatures, the poor clergy would be deprived of a considerable part of their income; and I should pity those poor women, who, if this plan were generally adopted, might for a time be *personally united* to particular men, and soon after be deserted; and if in the course of the time they

had

had been connected with those men, whom Mr. M. would call their *husbands*, any children should be born to them, how unhappy must the case of such infants be ! and I really think him to be highly culpable in publishing such sentiments, even if with himself we could suppose them good, unless he had previously obtained an act of legislature, to confirm his idea of marriage, or at least to make natural children legitimate: without this, if any should take his advice, and if young persons of both sexes, who have already a distant connexion, could be persuaded to think that God's holy ordinance of marriage was nothing more than what Mr. M. says it is, we should have marriages in abundance, and a miserable group of natural children. And the artful servant maid, who might be weary of continuing in a servile capacity, and was slowly disposed, would perhaps use all those wiles which wicked women practise to induce her master to humble her ; and she might perhaps quiet her conscience by considering, that according to Mr. M.'s ideas, it is hard for a man to be confined to one wife, when even the patriarchs had more, and especially if her mistress should have any bodily complaint, or be refractory, or given to levity ; as our penetrating divine has determined that these things are sufficient reasons for separation : perhaps therefore the vicious female servant might take pity on her master, and by prostituting herself, comfort him under his affliction; and then says Mr. M. the law

law of God obliges him to make her his wife, and equal with her mistress; and what vicious servant but would take this advantage and rival her, whom she had been used to *wait upon*, if possible.

Phil. The sad consequences you mention, and many more, equally bad or worse, would certainly follow, if this gentleman were allowed to dictate to the christian world, as to this particular; and though I am not of opinion, that it is right for clergymen of any church to monopolize the power of marrying persons to themselves, yet some previous solemn contract is certainly necessary to bind men, whom other principles will not sufficiently bind; and the pious, conscientious man, cares not how formally, or how solemnly he is bound, as he wishes to do that which is right, even in cases, wherein the laws of man will not confine him; and I imagine that every *such* man will allow, that the laws of this country, as to marriage, in many respects, though not in all, are salutary.

Monog. When I remarked some of the observations in this new work, in favour of Polygamy, I was rather struck, to find how similar the arguments were to those of that ancient polygamist, Bernardino Ochino, whom I think I mentioned to you before: he, in a few words, tells us much of that which Mr. M. has said in his long performance, when speaking to his opponent, "Abraham," says Bernardino, "you know had more wives than one, as likewise David, and abundance of others."

"and

and had it been unlawful for them to have taken more than one wife, they would have been sinners, in marrying several women, and what children they had by all their wives, except the first would have been bastards, because not begotten in lawful wedlock." Thus spake that venerable apuchin Bernardino Ochino, and how much like the language of the Rev. Mr. M. ?

Phil. Those, Monogamus, who have opposed the truth, have been obliged in all ages to have recourse to the same weak pleas and arguments; but Mr. M. excels in this, and objects to what few, at least of the decent part of mankind, would have objected; namely, to the translation of the hebrew words [דָּבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ] which signify a man's cleaving to his wife, words that our learned author intimates should be rendered in English, not shall *cleave to his wife*, but shall be *cemented into his wife*; but the translators have, in this respect, acted very suitably, as they did not wish to render these words in any such manner as would convey indecent ideas, and besides this, they proved themselves good and impartial judges of the original, as they had undoubtedly observed, that the phrase was to be understood in a general view, and not to be confined to Mr. M.'s *gross* idea; as it is sometimes used to express a spiritual cleaving to the Lord, thus in Deut. iv, and 4, we have [דָּבַק בַּיהוָה] a similar expression, which respects nothing of a carnal nature, but a cleaving to Jehovah in a religious sense; and when such an

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expression

expression is applied to a man and his wife, it certainly denotes their cleaving together in affection as well as *every other* part of conjugal duty.

Monog. Mr. M. to use his own expression, appears to be not a little skilful in the *vamping* and *cobbling* way, as to his interpretation of particular Scriptures; but in all his treatise nothing surprised me more than his remarks on Whittington's bells. I could not have imagined so grave a divine would have introduced any thing of so trifling a nature. Mr. M. seems to hint, that those persons, who read the Scripture, and understand it in such a manner as to conceive that it condemns Polygamy, are perhaps influenced more by the sound of words than their real meaning, and that monogamists comment upon the Scripture as Whittington did on the bells which he heard; Mr. M. reminds us that Whittington hearing the bells ring, interpreted the sound of them in the following manner

1 2 3 4 5 6

Turn again Whittington,

1 2 3 4 5 6

Lord-Mayor of London.

Men of deep study need relaxation, and here I think Mr. M. retires from his excessive labours in favour of Polygamy, to a recess rather unworthy of himself; but if the great Mr. M. will stoop so low, may we not retort upon him? and, with at least as much reason, conjecture, that from the

general

general scope of his treatise, he has so understood the Scripture, that it all sounds in his ideas, like

1 2 and 3

Po—ly—ga—my.

Phil. You have now reminded me, Monogamus, of Solomon's words, *answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit*; and nothing can justify your ludicrous idea, but a thought of *that* nature. Mr. M. has evidently endeavoured to bring the whole Scripture to side with his beloved doctrine, and as he is laughable in his observation upon Whittington, so it is not, in my opinion, any proof of his zeal in the Protestant cause, that he should intimate in one place, that those who say Polygamy is sinful, act worse than the papists, in striking the second commandment out of the Decalogue: may he insinuate, that in this view, the papists have only a mote in their eye, but that Protestant Monogamists have a beam in theirs; nor does Mr. M. discover any better disposition, when, because the clergy of his own church have some lucrative benefit from marriages, he joins them with Romish priests and popes, in his censures, and introduces the expression, of that detestable pope, who said, *O quantum profuit nobis hac fabula Christi (i. e.)* O how profitable to us is this fable of Christ: this was indeed language unworthy of an infidel, or an atheistical pope, but surely most improper to be *thus* introduced by such a character as Mr. M. but he is so fond of the fable of Polygamy, that it is astonishing to what lengths

lengths he goes, and what weak arguments he sometimes makes use of; he remarks in one place, that some have said, "Polygamy can not be lawful, because the union between Christ and his church is compared to the marriage union between a man and his wife; and as Christ has but one church, so a man should have but one wife." In answer to this, Mr. M. observes to us, that in the New Testament, we read of several churches of Christ being at different places, and Christ was the Spiritual husband of them all; and from hence he concludes, that this argument of his opponents against his sentiments must fall to the ground. Astonishing! that a man of letters should thus reason: If he could have proved that Christ has more spiritual brides than one; or that, if a man has five wives, yet they are but one body, or make but one wife altogether; then there would have been some force in this argument: For all Christ's churches in different places make but one bride, and one mystical body; and make up that *one* mystical woman, which hath Christ for her husband: and hence it is said, in the Revelations, xxi. chap. and 9th verse, where the whole Church of Christ is evidently meant, that the Church is the Lamb's *wife*, not his *wives*. The Lamb has but one bride though *she* has many members, as the human body hath, and yet is but one; but many wives and many members are very different things, and are the mystical union between Christ and his Church, and Mr. M.'s miserable notions of Poly-

gamy, and his sophistical arguments in favour of it. And, as when God made Adam, he made him but one wife, but would certainly have made him more, if more than one had been necessary to his happiness; so, if men will take more wives than one, they will by no means increase their felicity in so doing, and as our Lord speaks, *from the beginning it was not so*. And as to what Mr. M. suggests, that if Polygamy had been sinful, surely in some part of God's Word it would have been positively forbidden: We may well conclude that it was forbidden in the Seventh Commandment, as well as fornication, although neither are particularly mentioned in the Decalogue. And when the Prophets reproved the Jews for adultery, under that general idea, no doubt they reproved them who practised Polygamy. 'It is not said in the Sixth Commandment, that causeless anger has the nature of murder in it in the sight of God: nor in the Seventh Commandment, that looking upon a woman, to lust after her, is adultery; and yet it is evident, from our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, that *those* evils are breaches of *those* parts of God's Law, and consequently were prohibited thereby.

Monog. I could not but remark myself, that Mr. M.'s method of treating his opponents, and their arguments, appeared rather extraordinary; and it made me conclude, that he had some acquaintance with the quirks of the law as well as with the truths of the Gospel. But did you observe

how

how he triumphs in asserting, that Christ did not come to give us a new law? Here he thinks he has gained no small advantage over his adversaries,

Phil. It will readily be granted, that Christ did not come to give us a new law; but as it is impossible for Mr. M. to make it evident, that Polygamy was pleasing to God under the Mosaic dispensation, this will prove nothing in favour of his beloved ideas. At the same time it is evident that our Lord came to give us a *proper* idea of the Law, and to shew us, that some things written by Moses had been *permitted only* for the hardness of the Jews hearts, and which he did not wish his disciples to practise.

Monog. Whether Christ came to promulgate a new law or not, I think it is pretty evident, that Mr. M. aims so to do; and yet he wishes to convince you, that he has antiquity on his side; for as Lamech was a Polygamist, and lived so near Adam, Mr. M. concludes that Lamech must know Adam's sentiments on the matter; and he infers from thence that Adam had no idea of its being sinful to have more wives than one, otherwise he would have told his children the evil of it, and Lamech he supposes then would not have practised it: This, to be sure, is an admirable method of arguing, as if all children were so mindful of their parents as to avoid every evil which their parents advised them against. A murderer, who had killed his brother, might, on the same principle, say, "I certainly cannot deserve death,

death, though I have killed my brother; for Cain was not put to death for the like crime: And as he was Adam's son, if his father had thought there was any evil in such an act, he certainly would have told him, and then it is not probable that Cain would have taken away his brother's life."

Phil. Mr. M.'s logic is certainly very singular: in as unfair a manner does he reason concerning Joash. Of him it is said, that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, all the days of Jehoiada, the priest; and therefore, as Jehoiada, the priest, provided him two wives, and it is said that all the days of that good man the king did well, from this Account Mr. M. thinks it is plain that Polygamy was allowed of God. But has this author never observed, that in the 8th verse of the xiv. chapter of the first book of Kings, it is said by God, of *David*, that he kept God's commandments, and followed him *with all his heart*, and did *that only which was right in his eyes*? When God gave this honourable testimony of David, can it be thought, that his murder and adultery were right in the eyes of the Lord? Such a thought must be rejected: and that so good a priest as Jehoiada should procure two wives for the king, will no more prove God's approbation of that act, than his approbation of sin in general, because too often committed by great and good men: the language of Scripture therefore, concerning both David and Joash, must be understood in a restricted sense, as speaking

speaking not of every action of their lives, but as to the general scope of their conduct.

Monog. If Joash was perfect before God all his days, I am sure it cannot be proved that Mr. M. is perfectly consistent in all his writings; for in page 158, vol. I. he finds great fault with Bishop Patrick; for calling any part of the law; *Moses's* law, as implying too much that Moses spake by his own wisdom or spirit, and yet Mr. M. in the next page, positively asserts, that what Moses has written respecting divorces was from his own authority, and not by God's direction: it is not a little curious that this gentleman will take such liberties himself, and yet be displeased with the good Bishop for so small a matter; but if, as is reported, this grand work of Thelyphthora, has been the labour of several years, possibly Mr. M. in the course of that time, might have changed his mind; and this may perhaps account for his *seeming* to differ from himself: or possibly in the heat of his triumphs over his adversaries, or in the midst of his shouts in favour of polygamous marriages, he has, like other conquerors, pursued his victories too far.

Phil. He is so glaringly inconsistent in many instances, that I was almost tempted to think God himself had taken this wise man in his own craftiness, by preventing him from seeing his own striking improprieties, and thereby caused his own sin to find him out; otherwise, I think, he would have

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been ashamed to have endeavoured to prove, that in some parts of the Old Testament; where a virgin is simply spoken of, we must understand, that a betrothed virgin is meant; with a view evidently to prevent us, if possible, from thinking there is any sin in lusting after virgins not betrothed, or unmarried women; and for the same reason he directs us to understand our Lord, in Matth. v. 28. as speaking *only* of married or betrothed women; and when a Greek word is wanted to prevent the New Testament from speaking against Polygamy, our author very ingeniously supplies it; and though he tells you, with great precision, concerning the Hebrew letters, that the leaving out those tittles which distinguish [ב] *Beth* from [בּ] *Caph*, and [ד] *Daleth* from [דּ] *Resch*, in any Hebrew word, would be of great consequence, and sometimes totally alter the sense of the words; yet he can, notwithstanding, suppose, that the Holy Ghost has left out *whole words* in the Hebrew of the *Old*, and in the Greek of the *New Testament*, which (if Mr. M. is right) are absolutely necessary to the right understanding of some important passages, which we should have been in danger of misinterpreting, if this learned gentleman had not kindly stepped forward, and cleared up the matter to the whole Christian world.

Monog. This charitable scholar, out of the benevolence of his heart, has given us a little of his

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necessary

necessary aid also in his explanation of Deut. xxii. 21. Without his hints, many persons would never have known, that the virgin there spoken of, as having sinned in her father's house, was a betrothed virgin.

Phil. I am by no means satisfied with Mr. M.'s observations on that place, and I am ready to fear, that as marriage, in his judgement, is nothing more than what we have been used to call simple fornication; that therefore he is inclined to be rather too tender in his censures of that sin, and especially by his intimating that [נאף] the word which is used in the Seventh Commandment, is to be confined to acts of adultery, and does not mean illicit commerce in general. As this is the case, consequently fornication is not prohibited in the Ten Commandments; nor, according to Mr. M.'s idea, is the dreadful punishment mentioned in the xxii. chap. of Deut. intended for virgins who are *not betrothed*, though they should be guilty of such a wickedness in their father's house: but if the damsel there spoken of had been betrothed to some other man, previous to her sin, would not her crime then have been *adultery*? And would not the Holy Ghost have used the word [נאף] which signifies, as Mr. M. informs us, adultery in that place, rather than [ליונות] a word which commonly signifies to commit fornication, or, as our Bible renders it, *to play the whore*? But there is no proof

from

from that Scripture sufficient to demonstrate, that the young woman spoken of was supposed to be betrothed before her guilt was contracted; and her offence would justly make her deserve to be stoned to death, even though she had not been influenced by such lust, as that which leads harlots to prostitution, because she had wrought such wickedness in her *father's house*; and by covering her sin, and suffering herself to be betrothed afterwards, as if she had been really a virgin, she must necessarily bring a reproach upon her father, and vexation to the man who betrothed her unto himself; and when necessity called for making the matter public, it would be a disgrace to her family, and to her nation, and it would then be requisite for the honour of all Israel, that such young women should be made public examples.

Monog. Had the Author of Thelyphtora lived in the time of Dinah, he would certainly have been as angry with Jacob's family, as he is now with the zealous enemies to Polygamy, that they did not let Shechem have Dinah: He had humbled her and without any law to compel him to marry her, he desired her to be given to him; but her brethren were so strenuous against it, that they refused to give their sister to him; nay, they went so far as to say, that, because Shechem had humbled her, he had treated their sister as an harlot.

Phil.

Phil. The brethren of Dinah undoubtedly judged right, in that respect, and properly charged Shechem with using their sister [כַּוְנָה] as an harlot; for such acts should be called, not as says Mr. M. *God's holy ordinance of marriage*, but *fornication*; but while we justify the family of Jacob in judging, as they did, of the nature of the sin of Shechem and Dinah, yet we must censure them for killing the innocent subjects of Hamor, on that account; that action cannot be justified, any more than Mr. M.'s treatise, or what he says in his second volume concerning the *primitive Christians*, that they paid but little attention to God's jealousy over his laws, owing to their ignorance of Hebrew. By a variety of such strange assertions, and unfair conclusions, he is unwittingly stabbing the Christian cause: I say *unwittingly*, for I do not believe that Mr. M. however fallen, would be thus wicked from design; but his excessive attachment to his polygamous sentiments prevents him from seeing the pernicious tendency of his publication.

Monog. I perceive that you have some charity for this assiduous polygamist, and that you are not willing entirely to give up your once highly esteemed preacher, though you cannot approve of those notions which induce him to plead in favour of the practice of having several help-meets. Could I adopt his sentiments, I would advise him to send his disciples to receive instructions from king Ahasuerus and Sarah, and that he should point the

men to the example of the Persian king, and the women to Sarah: From that haughty prince, husbands might learn to govern their wives with a heavy hand, and make them live upon their nod; and by Sarah, the good wives might learn to give their hand-maids to their husbands; and if husbands and wives were thereby well taught, they would on the one side assume *such authority*, and on the other, manifest *such submission*, that without so great danger Polygamy might be embraced; but otherwise I should tremble for the consequences, as Mr. M.'s ideas totally differ from 1 Corinth. vii. 5. where Paul says, defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent. But if a man has two or five wives, he cannot well smile upon them all at once, nor do so much for them all, as to all other things, as if he had but one; and most probably the first taken to his wife may think herself defrauded in this respect; at least this will most likely be the case with English women till they are *suitably humbled*.

Phil. As to what you say of my not giving up Mr. M. entirely, it is true, that I once thought him a good man, and if he was really so, God will certainly shew him his folly, and make him mourn that he ever thus employed his pen. I shall be glad to find this to be the case in some future time; and as to 1 Corinth. vii. 5. you certainly judge right, as no man can have more wives than one without defrauding some *one* of them. And with what propriety

propriety could the Apostle have said in the 4th verse of that chapter, that *the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife*? If when a man has got one wife already, he may give his body to any other woman whom he chuses to marry, and that whether his first wife be willing or not? unless it could be proved that the first taken wives would generally consent, that a rival should be brought home to their husbands houses, and such instances would very rarely be met with. But Mr. M. suggests that the term wife is to be understood in a distributive sense, and then we must consider the Apostle as saying to the Corinthians, *The husband hath not power of his own body, but all his wives*, be they many or few. This sense of Paul's expressions may satisfy Mr. M. because it favours Polygamy, but other readers will conclude that there is no more in the Text to prove that the term wife, in that place, is distributive, than there is to determine the term husband to be so: it must indeed be acknowledged, that the evil consequences of a woman having many husbands, on account of the confusion that would exist as to her children, would be worse than what would follow a man's having many wives; but it being a greater evil in a woman than a man, will by no means prove that it is right for a man to practise Polygamy; against which vice the Apostle of the Gentiles certainly speaks, when he says in the second verse of the before cited chapter, *Let every man have his own wife, and let every*

woman

woman have her own husband. Mr. M. has taken
 great pains to confine this exhortation in Corinth:
 to another view ; he tells us, that it was the prac-
 tice in some Heathen nations for men to make an
 exchange of their wives, and that it was unfashion-
 able to do otherwise : and therefore he concludes,
 that the Corinthians did the same, as they were
 lewd to a proverb, and that the Apostle meant
 to forbid such a vice *only* in that expression. That
 the Corinthians were much given to fornication is
 evident ; but Mr. M. gives us no *more* satisfactory
 proof that the Corinthians were guilty of the sin
 he mentions, than what arises from his own con-
 jecture, founded upon the practices of other Hea-
 thens : but if we should suppose the Corinthians
 to have been given up to this sort of adultery, yet,
 surely it was the Apostle's desire that the Church
 at Corinth should abstain from *all uncleanness* ; and
 therefore, what valuable end can it answer to con-
 fine this exhortation to a particular species of vice ?
 unless indeed to justify that very unfair insinuation
 in Thelyphthora, that *there is not one word in the*
Apostles writings to prove the impropriety of the
lally's having more wives than one.

Monog. I much query, whether if any of the
 clergy should adopt Mr. M.'s sentiments, they may
 not find something in his book, which will convince
 them of the propriety of partaking of the comforts
 arising from the having a plurality of wives, be-
 cause he has informed us, in page 194. vol. I. that

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it was necessary, while the Church *was in an infant state*, that bishops and deacons should have but one wife; therefore some reverend gentleman may conclude perhaps, that as the church is now no longer in an *infant state*, there is surely now no necessity for such a restriction; and I am credibly informed, that some of the *clergy* have already adopted the practical part of the idea; but what more surprized me was, to hear, that in the course of a debate, supported by *ladies only*, in a certain polite assembly, respecting Mr. M.'s famous publication, the ladies in general seemed to favour Mr. M.'s scheme rather than otherwise. I wish those ladies had not some oblique ideas; that once it became fashionable for men to have many wives, their husbands, if they had any, would certainly not be so unreasonable as to deny them a little indulgence of the same nature, if they should desire it. But I am told, that in a debate on the same occasion, supported by gentlemen, Mr. M.'s polygamous system was generally reprobated; and that one speaker, on the occasion, went so far as to recommend the most disgraceful kind of punishment, inflicted on criminals in this country, as a proper reward for such an author.

Phil. I think the gentleman you speak of went too far, but I know some sensible women who are as severe on Mr. M. as any gentleman could possibly be; and it is true, that so many wretched consequences would follow from Polygamy, that

all who think properly must detest the scheme, and pity the author of Thelyphthora, which by this time I must confess I am almost tired of discoursing on, notwithstanding the pleasure I have received from my friend's conversation. The many indelicate ideas which the reader of this work must combat with, as being very frequently introduced by Mr. M. are not a little disagreeable, especially when he adds to those things what is still worse, such assertions as are little better than blasphemy, one of which we have already taken notice of; and another most shocking one he gives us in page 21, of his second vol. to the following purport: "That the lawfulness of Polygamy must of course be established, or the whole of Christianity must fall to the ground, and Christ not be he that was to come, but we must look for another." Such dogmatical assertions as these, so ill grounded, will, I hope, induce all who peruse this gentleman's *strange* publication, before they have read far, to take the author's advice, where he says, "Lay down my book and take up a better," meaning the Bible; and it must be charitably supposed, that Mr. M. gave us this exhortation in the integrity of his heart.

Monog. Your speaking of the integrity of Mr. M.'s heart brings to my memory what he says respecting Abimelech; when that king was about to take Abraham's wife, and God told him she was a prophet's wife: He pleaded in excuse, that he had been told, she was Abraham's sister, and that

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what he had done was in the integrity of his heart ; and because God says, *I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart*, therefore Mr. M. concludes, that God *hereby* expressed his approbation of a man's having more wives than one ; but whenever I have read that part of the Scripture, I always thought it meant nothing more than that Abimelech was not inclined to marry another man's wife ; and that if he had known Sarah was Abraham's wife, he would not have thought of taking her. But Mr. M. being very liberal in bestowing instructions upon the ignorant, with a view to make them adepts in the science of Polygamy, considers that declaration of God as tending not a little to prove, that Jehovah does not wish a man to be confined to one wife ; but that, while his first wife is living, he may, if he pleases, take more, in the integrity of his heart ; and according to Mr. M.'s ideas, in *other* parts of his work, if a man's first wife should happen to inherit any of the well known qualities of Xantippe, he has a licence to take a *second* on that account ; and if his *second* help-meet should be afflicted with a dead palsy, he would then have a justifiable reason for taking a *third* ; and should the *third* be given to excessive levity, in such a case, according to this divine's notions, the husband in *the integrity of his heart* might take a *fourth*, and so on as occasion might serve.

Phil

Phil. If the plan of this perverter of Scripture were to be adopted, I imagine we should find the necessity of more workhouses and hospitals than this kingdom at present affords: and as to the passage referred to in Genesis xx. it certainly speaks *only* of Abimelech's integrity, as being ignorant that Sarah was Abraham's wife, as you have understood; and without the obvious meaning thereof being left, it will prove nothing as to the propriety of having more than one wife at once; and if as the good calculators say, about fourteen men are equal to thirteen women; if men in general should have more than one wife a-piece, some men must have no wives. But if this were not the case, how excusable must that man be, who would wish to see a scheme put into execution, which must throw the whole English nation into confusion, and destroy the happiness of hundreds of families! which would necessarily be the case if Polygamy could be allowed by law.

Monog. I do not recollect, that when I heard his divine preach the Gospel, he then made use of any carnal weapons; but I think I observed much of this nature in his two octavo volumes. In this point of view, I consider his joining the superstition of Popery with what *he calls* the superstition of Monogamy; and his very frequent mention of the ancient laws against priests marriages, which laws have long been reprobated by all judicious protestants. And after joining those *improper* laws,

to his opponents arguments against Polygamy, he enters the lists against his adversaries like a furious champion, and at the first onset overcomes the hideous monster which he has drawn on his paper. This I thought was something like throwing dust in his reader's eyes

Phil. Whatever might be his reasons for doing this, it was not the most effectual method to convince those who might read his work, of the justice of his cause; and it certainly was not necessary to introduce so many things respecting Popery, in a treatise in favour of Polygamy; but it seems Mr. M. was desirous of making his book perfectly entertaining to those who might peruse it; and it is true, that however disgusting his polygamous notions may be, there is something pleasing in the story of Luther's triumph over the Papists, and some other such anecdotes.

Monog. I have lately read a pamphlet, in answer to Mr. M.'s chapter of Polygamy, and I was rather struck with an anecdote mentioned by the author, of a certain minister, who being asked whether he had read Thelyphthora, or intended to read it, replied in the negative; and being asked what objection he had to giving it a reading he answered, "He did not chuse to try how much *arsenic* his constitution would bear."

Phil. This answer expressed a most judicious sentiment indeed, as the book referred to is written with so much art, that I fear many readers will not detect

detect the fallacy of Mr. M.'s reasonings; but yet, I think, ministers are justifiable in reading it, that they may fortify their hearers against its destructive principles.

Monog. If ministers should speak much against this work, it will be well if Mr. M. does not number them among cavillers, sadducees, and similar characters, whom the modest author of this treatise on Female Ruin intimates, he thinks no more worthy to be noticed than the barkings of a dog at the moon: and therefore, in reference to such censures, he introduces the words, *Quid curet luna latratus canum: (i. e.)* What careth the moon for the barking of a dog: but whatever he may think of those who differ from him in this respect, it is a doubt with me, whether his plan will not be generally reprobated.

Phil. I most sincerely wish it may; but as it grows late, and our houses are very distant from each other, we must part, and leave this reverend polygamist and his treatise in favour of Polygamy to the just judgement of God. For the present, my dear friend Monogamus, I must bid you farewell.

Monog. My good friend, Philalethes, adieu.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

In page 8, line 28, insert " at the beginning of the line—p. 10, l. 18, for *indulged*, read *practised*—p. 11, l. 20, for *legal* read *general*; and in last line, for *נער* read *נער*—p. 17, l. 21, omit *I can*—p. 31, l. 18, for *a proof*, read *reproof*.

